

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-04 EB-11 CIEP-02 CEA-02 OMB-01

TRSE-00 COME-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 DRC-01 EUR-25 NIC-01 AID-20

/192 W

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R 041301Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8730

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

CINCPAC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: ASIAN STUDENT CONFERENCE ON ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF : A. BANGKOK 1157

B. BANGKOK 1759

C. BANGKOK 18751

SUMMARY: THE LONG AWAITED STUDENTS' ASIAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE FINALLY CONVENED IN BANGKOK NOVEMBER 30.

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THE THAI ORGANIZERS MAY NOT HAVE TOTALLY BEEN IN CONTROL

OF THE MEETING. DELEGATES, STUDENTS, AND HANGERS-ON TOPPED OFF THEIR DELIBERATIONS WITH DEMONSTRATIONS AT THE JAPANESE AND AMERICAN EMBASSIES PROTESTING ECONOMIC IMPERIALISM. END SUMMARY.

1. THE NATIONAL STUDENT CENTER OF THAILAND (NSCT) DECIDED IN JANUARY 1973 TO SPONSOR A CONFERENCE NOT ONLY TO DISCUSS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IN ASIA, BUT ALSO THE QUESTION OF BIG POWER ECONOMIC AND MILITARY "NEO-COLONIALISM" IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. THE ORIGINAL TARGET DATE WAS MAY (REFS A AND B). THE RTG THREW C \$ 2-534 9, 5#3 04909 -) 2#3, 85 ?3:-.3 (,92, 5#-5 43043 3,5-58;3 *49. :9.7,8 5 :#8,-, NORTH VIETNAM, AND NORTH KOREA MIGHT BE INVITED. WHEN THE CONFERENCE IDEA WAS REVIVED, THE HONG KONG-BASED ASIAN STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (ASA) ASSISTED THE NSCT IN INVITING OTHER STUDENT DELEGATIONS. THE CONFERENCE WAS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR MID-NOVEMBER, BUT THE THAI STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS OF MID-OCTOBER DELAYED THE CONFERENCE TWO WEEKS.

2. THE FOUR DAY CONFERENCE BEGAN NOVEMBER 30. THE CONFERENCE STIRRED SOME PRESS COVERAGE NOT BY ITS DELIBERATIONS, BUT BECAUSE OF WHO WAS TRYING TO GET IN. THE NEWSPAPERS CARRIED ARTICLES THAT THREE JAPANESE RED ARMY ACTIVISTS WERE STOPPED IN HONG KONG AT THE REQUEST OF THAI AUTHORITIES. HEADLINES ALSO COVERED THE QUICK DEPARTURE OF "TROTSKYITE MARXIST REVOLUTIONARY" TARIQ ALI, DECLARED PERSONA NON GRATA ON THE EVE OF THE CONFERENCE.

3. THE DELEGATES TOPPED OFF THEIR CONFERENCE WITH A MARCH ON THE JAPANESE AND AMERICAN EMBASSIES (REF C). THE PROTEST LETTER GIVEN THE AMBASSADOR COMPLAINED ABOUT: AMERICAN COMMERCIAL INVESOMENT, AMERICAN MILITARY PREAUENCE, AND AMERICAN AID. THE PROTEST LETTER DID NOT ELABORATE ON THESE POINTS, BUT PROMISED THAT THE CONFERENCE WOULD SEND THE EMBASSY A COPY OF ITS DELIBERATIONS.

4. ALTHOUGH PRASARN THIRATVERAKUL WAS CHAIRMAN OF THE CONFERENCE AND NOMINAL LEADER OF THE DEMONSTRATION, HE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WAS NOT IN PERFECT CONTROL OF THE CROWD ON THE EMBASSY GROUNDS. THIRAYUDH BOONMEE, FORMER NSCT SECRETARY-GENERAL, STOOD AT PRASARN'S SIDE WHISPERING ADVICE DURING DISCUSSIONS WITH AMERICAN OFFICERS. AUSTRALIAN DELEGATES WERE TRYING HARD TO BE MORE MILITANT THAN THEIR OBVIOUSLY MODERATE ASIAN COLLEAGUES. THE "BANGKOK POST" WROTE DECEMBER 4 THAT "THE OBSERVER FROM MALAYSIA LED THE OTHER STUDENTS TO SHOUT 'YANKEE GO HOME'

WHEN THE AMBASSADOR WAS DEPARTING, BUT WAS SURPRISED
TO FIND THE THAI NOT FOLLOWING HIS LEAD. THEY SAID THAT
THEY WOULD DEMONSTRATE AGAINST IMPERIALISM IN A THAI WAY."

5. COMMENT: ONE OF THE CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES WAS TO
CREATE A SENSE OF UNANIMITY AMONG ASIAN STUDENT
GROUPS, AND A REPORTED RESULT WAS A DECISION TO STAGE
DEMONSTRATIONS DURING PRIME MINISTER TANAKA'S SOUTHEAST
ASIAN TOUR THIS JANUARY. JUDGING FROM THE CONVERSATION
AND ACTIONS OF THE ASSEMBLAGE ON THE EMBASSY LAWN,
CAMARADERIE WAS A GREATER RESULT THAN UNANIMITY.
ADDITIONALLY, AS THE THAI "ANTI-JAPANESE PRODUCTS
WEEK" OF NOVEMBER 1972 SHOWED, ECONOMICS AND NATIONALISM
MAKE A GOOD MIX.
KINTNER

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